7500 pilgrims) from India to Pakistan and five Muslim pilgrimages (total 1350 pilgrims) from Pakistan to India. Both Government facilitate the transportation, security and accommodation for stay of the pilgrims during their visits under the above Protocol.

Violence in Nepal

1074. SHRI SYED AZEEZ PASHA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the recent incidents of violence in Nepal between the Nepalese and Non-Nepalese;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any enquiry was made as to the involvement of Indians living there in these incidents; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) Government are not aware of incidents of violence in Nepal between 'Nepalese' and 'non-Nepalese' recently. There have, however, been disturbances in the Terai region of Nepal, where sections of the local population have, *inter alia,* demanded citizenship rights in Nepal.

(c) and (d) As the matter relates to developments within the territory of Nepal, it is for the Government of Nepal to address the issues concerned.

Scheme for railway line from China

†1075. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government of China is contemplating a scheme of laying a railway line through bordering areas adjoining India for connecting other cities of China with the capital of Tibbet-Lahasa;

(b) if so, whether Government of China also propose to extend the said railway line to Khunjarb pass situated along the border of Pakistan and China;

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) whether Government have raised this matter with Government of China in view of safety of Indian borders; and

(d) if so, the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE):(a)Yes.

(b) Government are aware of some media reports in this regard.

(c) and (d) Government keep a constant watch on all developments having a bearing on India's security and takes all necessary measures to safeguard it.

Joint mechanism for terrorism .

1076. SHRIMATI HEMA MAJINI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that some democratic countries alleged that Pakistan is the epicenter of terrorist activities; and

(b) if so, in what manner Government are agreeing to launch a joint operation with Pakistan against terrorism?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB, MUKHERJEE): (a) Some officials of certain countries involved in International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan are reported to have said that the tribal areas of Pakistan bordering Afghanistan have become a 'safe haven' for terrorists. There have also been media reports about the links of Pakistan based terrorist groups in terrorist activities in other countries.

(b) There is no proposal now to launch a joint operation with Pakistan against terrorism. However, the Joint Terrorism mechanism has been launched with its first meeting held in Pakistan.

Nuclear cooperation with USA

1077. SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state: